

1. (Once amended) An isolated polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:
  - a) a polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
  - b) a naturally occurring polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence at least 90% identical to an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
  - c) a biologically active fragment of a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and
  - d) an immunogenic fragment of a polypeptide having an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, said fragment comprising at least 15 contiguous amino acid residues.
2. An isolated polypeptide of claim 1, having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.
3. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 1.
6. A recombinant polynucleotide comprising a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide of claim 3.
7. A cell transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 6.
8. A transgenic organism comprising a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 6.
9. A method for producing a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:
  - a) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the polypeptide, wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide, and said recombinant polynucleotide comprises a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of claim 1, and
  - b) recovering the polypeptide so expressed.

10. A method of claim 9, wherein the polypeptide has the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.
11. An isolated antibody which specifically binds to a polypeptide of claim 1.
12. An isolated polynucleotide comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of:
  - a) a polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,
  - b) a naturally occurring polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence at least 90% identical to a polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,
  - c) a polynucleotide having a sequence complementary to a polynucleotide of a),
  - d) a polynucleotide having a sequence complementary to a polynucleotide of b) and
  - e) an RNA equivalent of a)-d).
13. An isolated polynucleotide comprising at least 60 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 12.
14. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12, the method comprising:
  - a) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample, and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a hybridization complex is formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and
  - b) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.
15. A method of claim 14, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.

16. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12, the method comprising:

- a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and
- b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

17. A composition comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

18. A composition of claim 17, wherein the polypeptide has an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

20. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an agonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and
- b) detecting agonist activity in the sample.

23. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an antagonist of a polypeptide of claim 1, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 1 to a compound, and
- b) detecting antagonist activity in the sample.

28. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness in altering expression of a target polynucleotide, wherein said target polynucleotide comprises a polynucleotide sequence of claim 12, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising the target polynucleotide to a compound, under conditions suitable for the expression of the target polynucleotide,

- b) detecting altered expression of the target polynucleotide, and
  - c) comparing the expression of the target polynucleotide in the presence of varying amounts of the compound and in the absence of the compound.
29. A method for assessing toxicity of a test compound, said method comprising:
- a) treating a biological sample containing nucleic acids with the test compound;
  - b) hybridizing the nucleic acids of the treated biological sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides of a polynucleotide of claim 12 under conditions whereby a specific hybridization complex is formed between said probe and a target polynucleotide in the biological sample, said target polynucleotide comprising a polynucleotide sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 12 or fragment thereof;
  - c) quantifying the amount of hybridization complex; and
  - d) comparing the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample with the amount of hybridization complex in an untreated biological sample, wherein a difference in the amount of hybridization complex in the treated biological sample is indicative of toxicity of the test compound.